

# Influenza Surveillance in Ireland – Weekly Report

Influenza Week 40 2014 (29<sup>th</sup> September – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2014)



## Summary

- This is the first influenza surveillance report of the 2014/2015 influenza season.
- All indicators of influenza activity in Ireland were at low levels during week 40 2014:
  - The sentinel GP influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rate was 2.2 per 100,000 population in week 40 2014, remaining low and stable compared to the rate of 2.9 per 100,000 reported during week 39 2014.
    - ◆ ILI rates remain below the Irish baseline threshold (21.0 per 100,000 population)
    - ◆ ILI rates remain at low levels in all age groups
- The proportion of influenza-related calls to GP Out-of-Hours services were at low levels for week 40 2014.
- No influenza positive specimens were reported from the NVRL from sentinel or non-sentinel sources.
- One respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and two parainfluenza virus type 3 (PIV-3) positive specimens were reported from the NVRL from non-sentinel sources during week 40 2014.
- During week 40 2014, no confirmed influenza hospitalised cases were notified.
- No confirmed influenza cases admitted to ICU were reported to HPSC during week 40 2014. There were no reports of any influenza-associated deaths during week 40.
- No acute respiratory outbreaks were reported to HPSC during week 40 2014.
- In Europe, low influenza activity was reported throughout the summer period. Globally, the southern hemisphere influenza season seems to be coming to an end. In Europe and North America, influenza activity remains at inter-seasonal levels.

## Surveillance Systems

In order to monitor influenza activity in Ireland a number of surveillance systems are currently in place:

1. Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) GP sentinel surveillance system
2. Virological data from the National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL)
3. GP Out-of-Hours surveillance system
4. Influenza notifications reported on the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting system (CIDR)
5. Enhanced surveillance of all hospitalised confirmed influenza cases aged 0-14 years
6. Intensive Care Society of Ireland (ICSI) enhanced surveillance of all critical care patients with confirmed influenza.
7. Outbreak reporting on CIDR
8. Network of sentinel hospitals reporting hospital admission data

Further information on influenza in Ireland is available at [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie)

## 1. GP sentinel surveillance system - Clinical Data

During week 40 2014, five influenza-like illness (ILI) cases were reported from sentinel GPs, corresponding to an ILI consultation rate of 2.2 per 100,000 population, which is below average for this time of year. The ILI rate for week 40 2014 is below the Irish baseline threshold (21/100,000 population) (figure 1). ILI age specific rates were low in all age groups during week 40 2014 (figure 2).

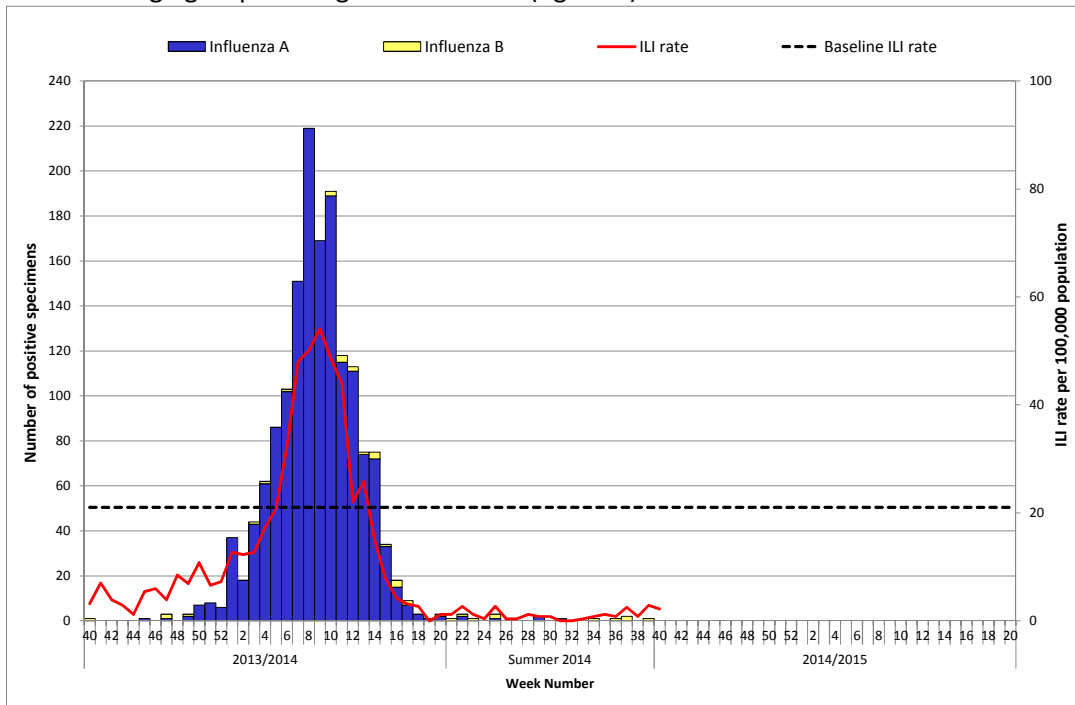


Figure 1. ILI sentinel GP consultation rates per 100,000 population, baseline ILI threshold rate, and number of positive influenza A and B specimens tested by the NVRL, by influenza week and season. *Source: ICGP and NVRL*

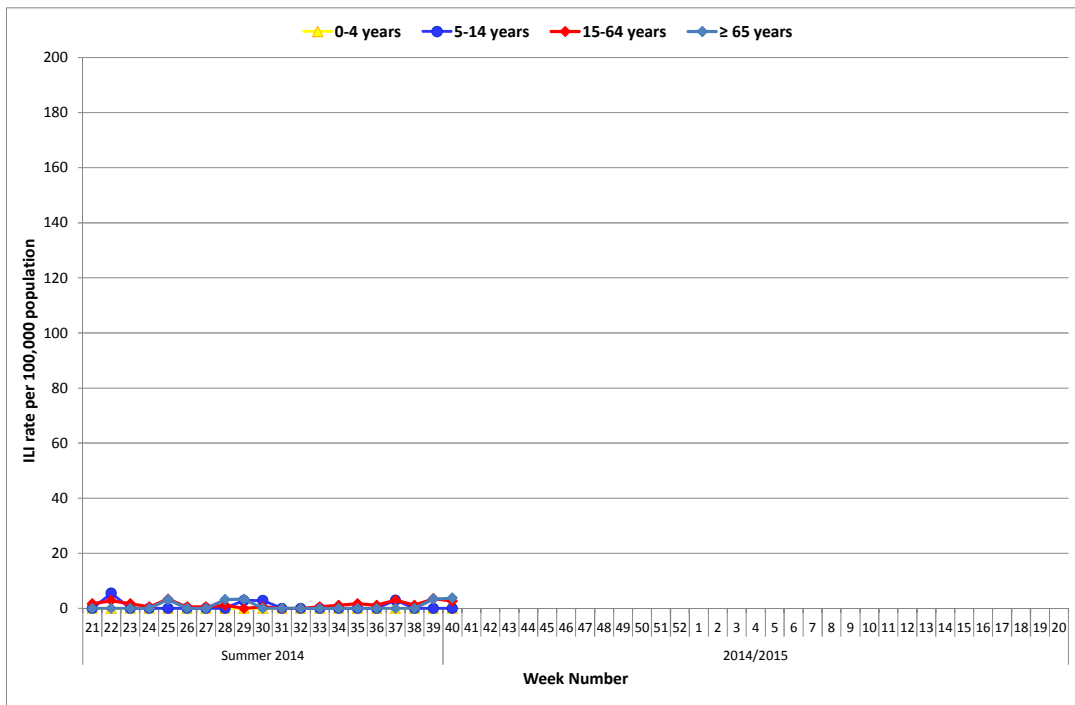


Figure 2: Age specific sentinel GP ILI consultation rate per 100,000 population by week during the summer of 2014 and the 2014/2015 influenza season to date. *Source: ICGP.*

## 2. Influenza and Other Respiratory Virus Detections - NVRL

The data reported in this section for the 2014/2015 influenza season refers to sentinel and non-sentinel specimens tested for influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), adenovirus, parainfluenza viruses types 1, 2 & 3 (PIV-1, -2, & -3) and human metapneumovirus (hMPV) by the National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL) (figure 3, tables 1 & 2).

- No influenza positive specimens were reported from the NVRL from sentinel GP sources or non-sentinel sources for week 40 2014.
- One respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and two parainfluenza virus type 3 (PIV-3) positive specimens were reported from the NVRL from non-sentinel sources during week 40 2014.

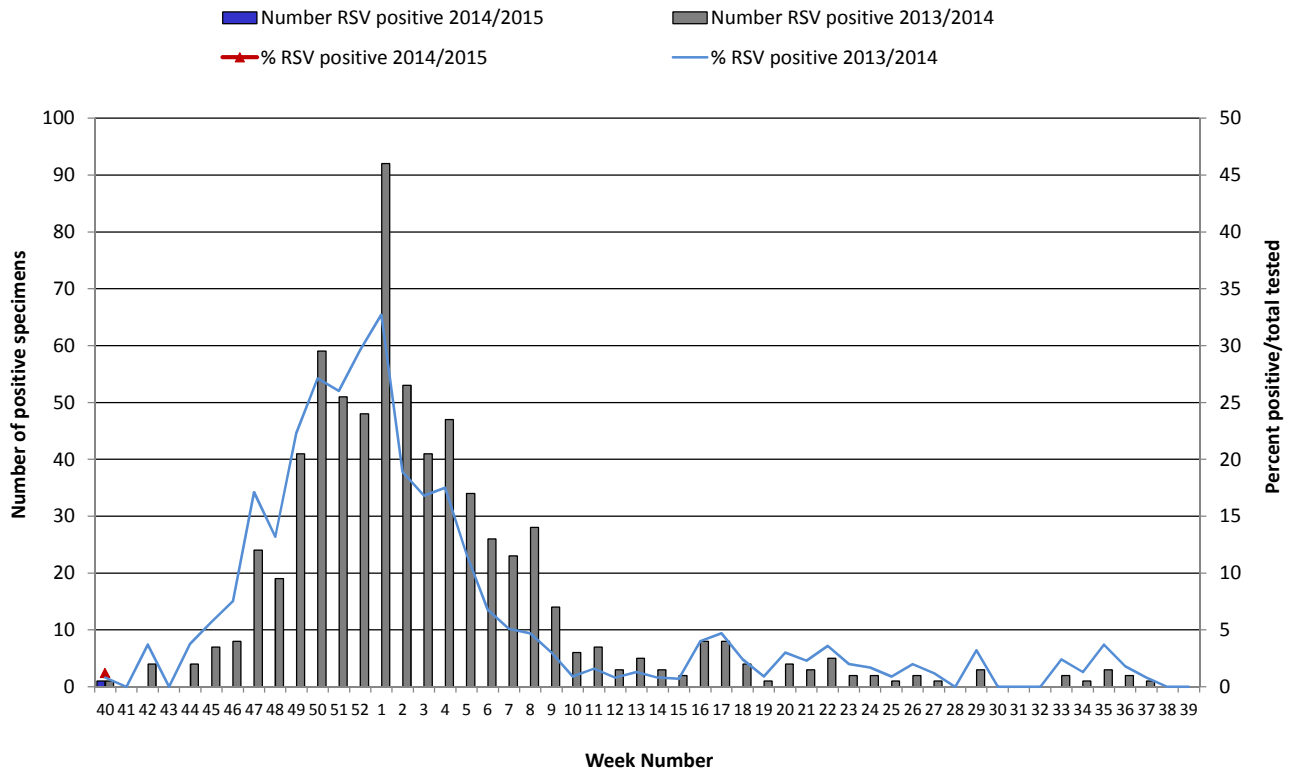


Figure 3: Number and percentage of non-sentinel RSV positive specimens detected by the NVRL during the 2014/2015 season, compared to the 2013/2014 season. Source: NVRL.

**Table 1: Number of sentinel and non-sentinel\* respiratory specimens tested by the NVRL and positive influenza results, for week 40 2014. Source: NVRL**

Week	Specimen type	Total tested	Number influenza positive	% Influenza positive	Influenza A				Influenza B
					A (H1)pdm09	A (H3)	A (not subtyped)	Total influenza A	
<b>40 2014</b>	Sentinel	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non-sentinel	82	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 2: Number of non-sentinel specimens tested by the NVRL for other respiratory viruses and positive results, for week 40 2014. Source: NVRL**

Week	Specimen type	Total tested	RSV	% RSV	Adenovirus	% Adenovirus	PIV-1	% PIV-1	PIV-2	% PIV-2	PIV-3	% PIV-3	PIV-4	% PIV-4	hMPV	% hMPV
<b>40 2014</b>	Sentinel	1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Non-sentinel	82	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

\* Please note that non-sentinel specimens relate to specimens referred to the NVRL (other than sentinel specimens) and may include more than one specimen from each case.

### 3. Regional Influenza Activity by HSE-Area

Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory data and outbreaks.

All HSE-Areas reported no influenza activity during week 40 2014 (figure 4).

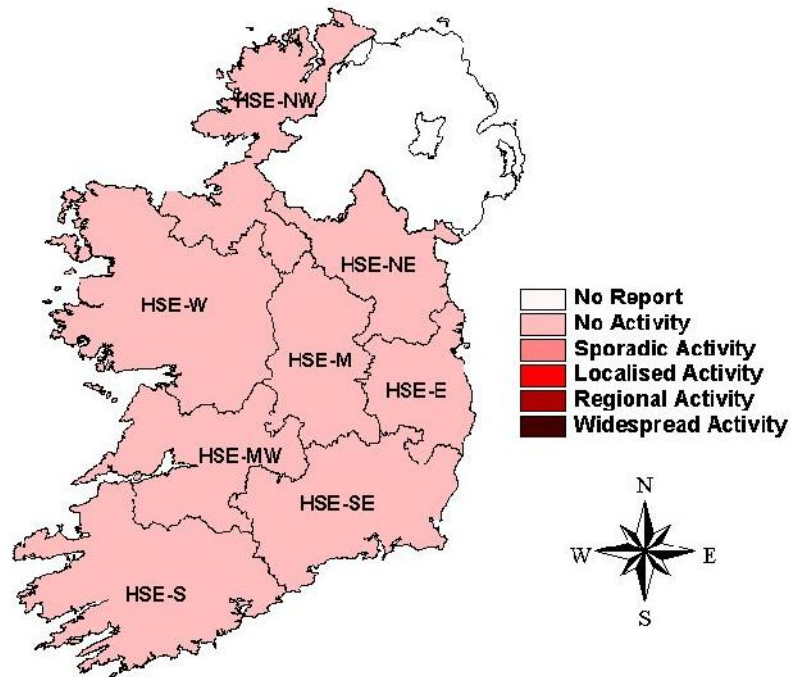
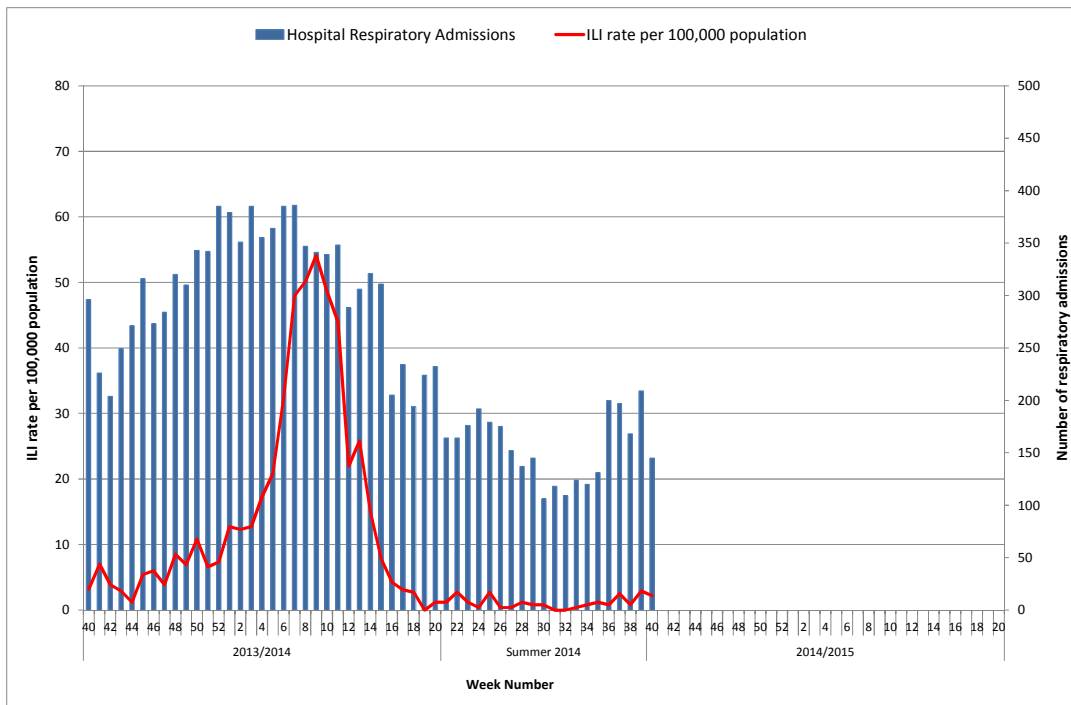


Figure 4: Map of provisional influenza activity by HSE-Area during influenza week 40 2014

#### Sentinel hospitals

The Departments of Public Health have established at least one sentinel hospital in each HSE-Area, to report data on total, emergency and respiratory admissions on a weekly basis.

Respiratory admissions reported from sentinel hospitals were at low levels during week 40 2014 (figure 5).

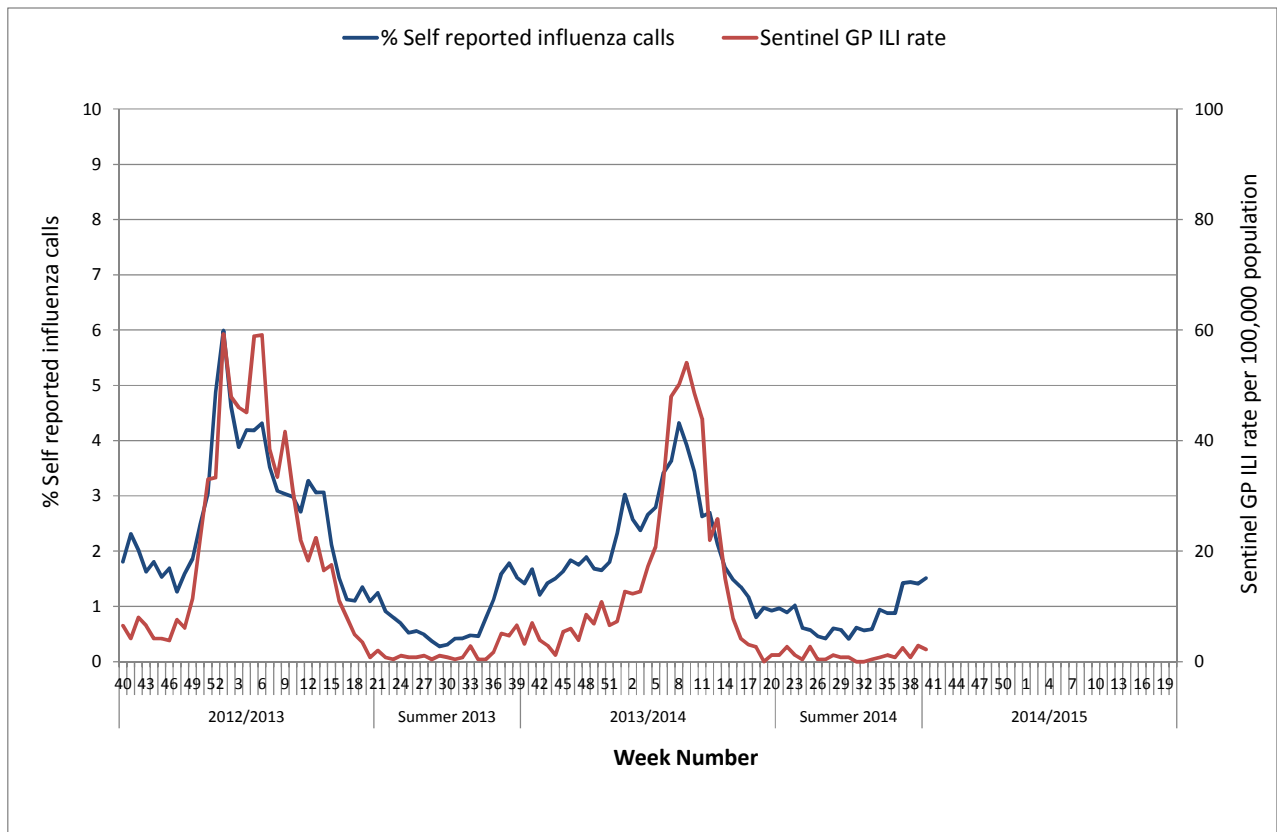


**Figure 5: Number of respiratory admissions reported from sentinel hospitals and ILI sentinel GP consultation rate per 100,000 population by week and season. Source: Departments of Public Health - Sentinel Hospitals & ICGP.**

#### 4. GP Out-Of-Hours services surveillance

The Department of Public Health in HSE-NE is collating national data on calls to nine of thirteen GP Out-of-Hours services in Ireland. Records with clinical symptoms reported as flu or influenza are extracted for analysis. This information may act as an early indicator of increased ILI activity. However, data are self-reported by callers and are not based on coded influenza diagnoses.

The proportion of influenza-related calls to GP Out-of-Hours services remained at low levels during week 40 2014 (figure 6).



**Figure 6: Self-reported influenza-related calls as a proportion of total calls to Out-of-Hours GP Co-ops and sentinel GP ILI consultation rate per 100,000 population by week and season. Source: GP Out-Of-Hours services in Ireland (collated by HSE-NE) & ICGP.**

## 5. Influenza & RSV notifications

Influenza and RSV cases notifications are reported on Ireland’s Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR), including all positive influenza /RSV specimens reported from all laboratories testing for influenza/RSV and reporting to CIDR.

Influenza and RSV notifications are reported in the [Weekly Infectious Disease Report for Ireland](#).

## 6. Influenza Hospitalisations

No confirmed influenza cases were reported as hospitalised during week 40 2014.

## 7. Critical Care Surveillance

The Intensive Care Society of Ireland (ICSI) are continuing with the enhanced surveillance system set up during the 2009 pandemic, on all critical care patients with confirmed influenza. HPSC process and report on this information on behalf of the regional Directors of Public Health/Medical Officers of Health.

No confirmed influenza cases were admitted to critical care and reported to HPSC during week 40 2014.

## 8. Mortality Surveillance

Influenza-associated deaths include all deaths where influenza is reported as the primary/main cause of death by the physician or if influenza is listed anywhere on the death certificate as the cause of death. HPSC receives daily mortality data from the General Register Office (GRO) on all deaths from all causes registered in Ireland. These data have been used to monitor excess all-cause and influenza and pneumonia deaths as part of the influenza surveillance system and the European Mortality Monitoring Project. These data are provisional due to the time delay in deaths' registration in Ireland. <http://www.euromomo.eu/>

- There were no reports of any influenza-associated deaths occurring during week 40 2014.
- During week 40 2014, no excess all-cause mortality was reported in Ireland after correcting GRO data for reporting delays with the standardised EuroMOMO algorithm.

## 9. Outbreak Surveillance

No acute respiratory outbreaks were reported to HPSC during week 40 2014.

## 10. International Summary

In Europe, low influenza activity was reported throughout the summer period. Globally, the southern hemisphere influenza season seems to be coming to an end. In Europe and North America, influenza activity remains at inter-seasonal levels. For the latest WHO influenza surveillance report, see [here](#).

- Further information is available on the following websites:
  - Northern Ireland <http://www.fluawareni.info/>
  - Europe – ECDC <http://ecdc.europa.eu/>
  - Public Health England <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/SeasonalInfluenza/>
  - United States CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm>
  - Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php>
- For up to date information on human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in China including the current case numbers and the WHO assessment of the situation please see [here](#).
- Information on Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV), including the latest ECDC rapid risk assessment is available on the [ECDC website](#). Further information and guidance documents are also available on the [HPSC website](#).

## 11. WHO recommendations on the composition of influenza virus vaccines

The WHO vaccine strain selection committee recommended that vaccines for use in the 2014/2015 influenza season (northern hemisphere winter) contain the following: an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus; an A/Texas/50/2012 (H3N2)-like virus; a B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus.

### Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Lisa Domegan and Joan O'Donnell, HPSC. HPSC wishes to thank the sentinel GPs, the ICGP, NVRL, Departments of Public Health, ICSI and HSE-NE for providing data for this report.